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Black Truffle Cardinal Flower

Lobelia cardinalis 'Black Truffle'

Plant Height: 24 inches

Flower Height: 4 feet

Spread: 24 inches

Spacing: 20 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 3a

Description:

This variety has stunning tall spikes of bright scarlet flowers and foliage that emerges near black and matures to deep burgundy; looks wonderful in mass plantings along borders

Ornamental Features

Black Truffle Cardinal Flower features showy spikes of scarlet flowers rising above the foliage from mid summer to early fall. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its pointy leaves emerge black in spring, turning burgundy in colour with prominent coppery-bronze tips and tinges of grayish green throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Black Truffle Cardinal Flower is an herbaceous perennial with a rigidly upright and towering form. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies and hummingbirds to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Black Truffle Cardinal Flower is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



Black Truffle Cardinal Flower flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Black Truffle Cardinal Flower in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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Planting & Growing

Black Truffle Cardinal Flower will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity extending to 4 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 24 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 20 inches apart. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 5 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!



Black Truffle Cardinal Flower foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It is quite adaptable, prefering to grow in average to wet conditions, and will even tolerate some standing water. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selection of a native North American species, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Black Truffle Cardinal Flower is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.